

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 10

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the adoption of the Tennessee State Flag by an act of the General Assembly on April 17, 1905.

WHEREAS, as visible symbols of identity and unity, flags, banners and standards have been created by tribes, kingdoms, empires, republics and other political entities and their subdivisions throughout much of history; in our own country, besides the national flag, the several states and territories and many municipalities have adopted flags; and

WHEREAS, the State Flag of Tennessee, designed and proposed to several members of the Tennessee General Assembly by LeRoy Reeves of Johnson City, was adopted by the enactment of Chapter 498 of the Public Acts of 1905 on April 17th of that year; Reeves was then serving as a captain in Company F, Third Infantry in the Tennessee National Guard; and

WHEREAS, although there was a failed attempt to adopt a state flag in 1861 and a design for a flag was approved by joint resolution in 1897 for the Centennial Exposition, there was no official statutory adoption of a state flag prior to 1905; and

WHEREAS, Captain Reeves offered the following description of his design: *The three stars are of pure white, representing the three grand divisions of the state. They are bound together by the endless circle of the blue field, the symbol of being bound together in one – an indissoluble trinity. The large field is crimson. The final blue bar relieves the sameness of the crimson field and prevents the flag from showing too much crimson when hanging limp. The white edgings contrast more strongly with the other colors;* and

WHEREAS, the new flag was first flown in Tennessee when Captain Reeves himself raised the flag over the Armory in Johnson City on May 22, 1905; the widely recognized design not only graces the State Capitol in Nashville and many other state buildings and schools, but

has been and continues to be flown by individual Tennesseans at their residences and has been taken by citizens of this state to various parts of the world; and

WHEREAS, Captain Reeves willed the first flag flown over the Armory in Johnson City to the State of Tennessee, and it now resides in the Tennessee State Museum, along with another copy which he donated to the Tennessee Historical Society; and

WHEREAS, LeRoy Reeves, an attorney in practice with his father in 1905, went on to a distinguished military career, joining the regular United States Army following World War I, serving in the Judge Advocate General's Office, and retiring with the rank of Colonel in 1940; and

WHEREAS, Reeves' simple, but symbolically powerful, composition is widely regarded as meeting most of the vexillological standards for good flag design, particularly in its avoidance of excessive busyness associated with the inclusion of a complicated state seal and its elegant employment of few elements outlined in only three colors; and

WHEREAS, on the eve of the 100th anniversary of the adoption of our State Flag, it is fitting that we pause to commemorate that occasion and to honor that proud symbol of our statehood and its creator; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the adoption of the Tennessee State Flag, express our gratitude to and honor the memory of its designer, LeRoy Reeves, whose powerful and evocative composition continues to inspire us to live up to the values that we share as citizens of our state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.